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THE STANDARD NATURAL HISTORY.¹—We have received six parts of what promises to be a most timely and excellent work. The publishers and editors have gone to work in the right way in securing the aid of specialists in writing upon special groups. In this respect the work will be an advance even upon Brehm's Ani-

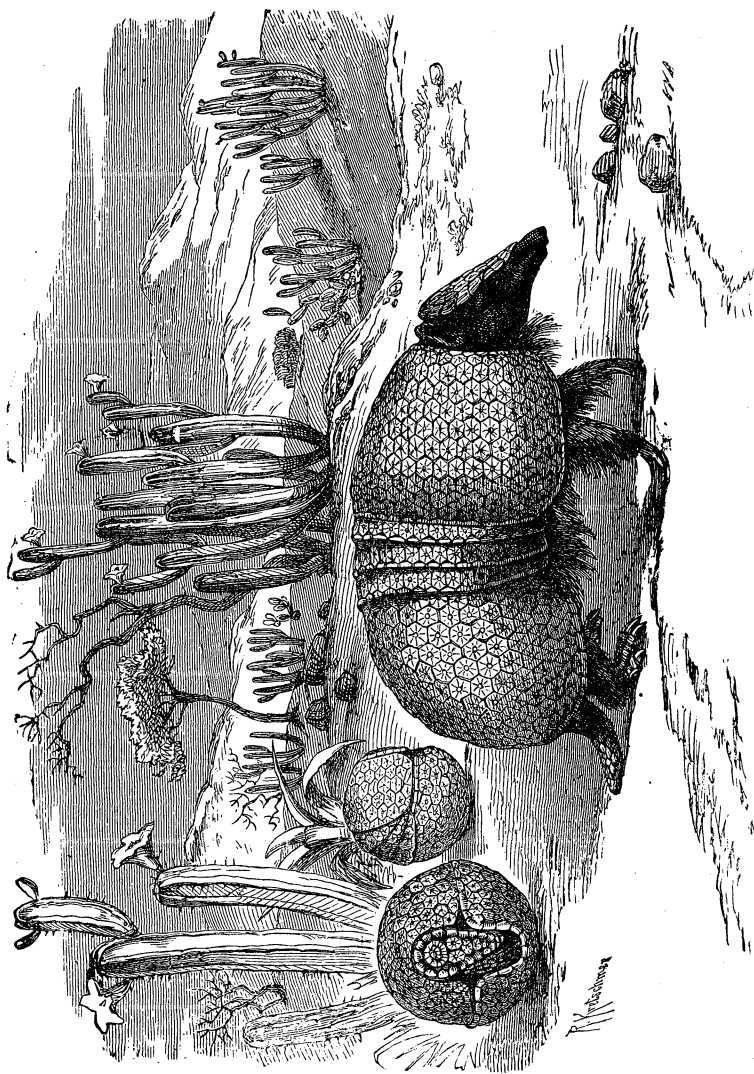


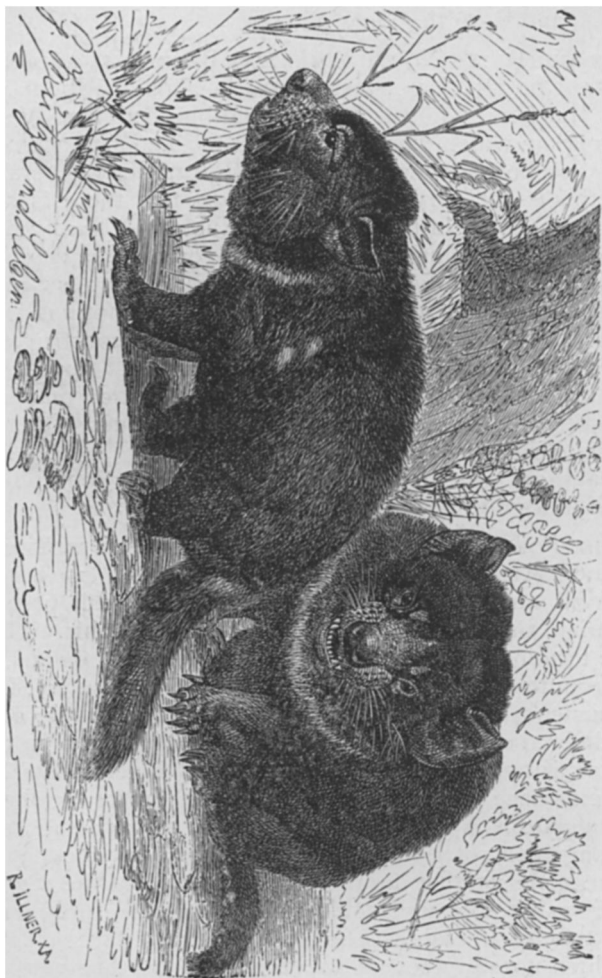
FIG. 1.—*Polydactylus tricinctus*, three-banded Armadillo.

mal Life, which was prepared by only a few writers, while the

¹ *The Standard Natural History*. By the leading American authorities. Edited by ELLIOTT COUES, M.D., and J. S. KINGSLEY. Boston, S. E. Cassino & Co. 50 cents a part, \$6.00 a volume, cloth.

editors of the present work have engaged nearly forty collaborators. The difficulty will be to secure sufficient unity in the mode of treatment by so many authors; but we do not see any marked signs of this in the parts before us. This is a subscription work, and most publishers of such works for popular sale are timid and even silly about admitting anything that looks like evolution, but

FIG. 2.—*Dasyurus ursinus*, Tasmanian devil.



the present work is as it should be, in accord and in fact based on this principle. We notice in the parts before us that the Protozoa are treated by Mr. Romyn Hitchcock, the Infusoria by Dr. D. S. Kellicott, the Crustacea by Mr. J. S. Kingsley and Professor E. A. Birge, the mammals by Dr. Coues, Professor R. R. Wright and Professor T. Gill. The names of the other contribu-

tors are a guarantee of the permanent value of what will be a representative American work. It should be widely patronized. The illustrations are ample, many indeed from European sources, but with many original sketches. The paper and presswork are faultless. The work is to be issued in six imperial octavo volumes; Vol. I is to be devoted to the lower invertebrates; Vol. II to arthropods; III to the lower vertebrates; IV to birds; V to mammals, and VI to the races of man.

DAVIS AND RICE'S NORTH AMERICAN BATRACHIA AND REPTILIA FOUND EAST OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER.¹—This little book presents us with the best synopsis of our cold-blooded land Vertebrata of our region which has yet appeared. The characters of the divisions are better drawn than in most American general works, though this is not very high praise. In fact there is room for much improvement in this respect, and it could hardly be otherwise, so long as no general work based on a general revision of the subject is yet published. The greatest defect is seen in the artificial keys, which are only evil, and that continually. It is well enough to have them, but they can be so constructed so as not to make specific and individual characters appear to be of generic or even of higher value. Similar objection may be made to the artificial keys in Jordan's Manual, and Coues' Key to North American Birds.

The authors extend our knowledge of the geographical distribution in a good many important points.

ON THE FORMATION OF THE EGG AND THE BLASTODERM IN THE VIVIPAROUS APHIS, by Ludwig Will.²—*I. The Formation of the Egg.*—Will studied by means of sections and fresh preparations the ovarian tubes of the viviparous form of Aphis. He found that the terminal chamber differed, in histological details, considerably from that hitherto described by authors. Huxley, Leuckart and Claus considered that the terminal chamber of the oviparous Aphis differed considerably from the viviparous form, not only in the whole arrangement and signification of the elements, but also in the existence of a yolk passage. Will, however, shows that in the viviparous Aphis there exists also a yolk passage, and that the arrangement of the cells in the interior of the chamber is quite the same as that in the true females, and the elements he considers as vitelligenous cells. The wall of the fully developed ovarian tube of the adult is formed of a single layer of epithelial cells, which not only covers the egg chamber but also the terminal one. Nothing was seen of the structureless tunica propria mentioned by former writers on the subject, although he used in his investigations one of Zeiss's homogeneous immersion lenses.

¹ *Bulletin No. 5 of the Illinois State Laboratory of Natural History.* Feb., 1883, pp. 66.

² *Zur Bildung des Eies und des Blastoderm bei den Viviparen Aphiden.* Von LUDWIG WILL. Aus den Arbeiten d. zool. zoot. Instituts in Würzburg, Bd. VI.